1a: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8



754 682 ing his death. Several trustworthy men selected from the number of ever-present would-be executioners unexpectedly club the criminal down either in the plaza or from an ambush on the road. They immediately cut out his eyes or at least blindfold him to deprive the shadow of sight, sometimes they make cross-shaped gashes in the palms of his hands, and then he is interred in a pit without further ceremony. The killers paint themselves with charcoal and go into seclusion for a month.

[578] Suspicion of sorcery almost invariably falls on alien Indians resident in the village, very rarely on a tribesman. Because of this fact I never cease wondering at the temerity of natives who, despite their notoriously mistrustful nature, venture to marry outside their own group. In the exceptional cases a magician apparently charges a tribesman with the death not from jealousy, but rather from fear of being himself accused of sorcery. The Canella told me about a case where this was so obviously true that only the Indians' blind dread of sorcery prevented their recognition of the fact. The accuser in this instance achieved a double success: he got rid of a colleague who, unless forestalled, would probably have prepared the same fate for him; and through the "discovery" of the evil magic which the sorcerer was supposed to have buried in the plaza the accuser gained great esteem for his services.

754 828 In 1903—only a few years after the advent of the Čą'kamekra—a certain Kavų'i of that tribe who had married a Canella woman was killed for sorcery, after having allegedly in the course of a trifling dispute threatened his wife with evil magic. In great alarm she told her relatives; some time after she fell ill and died. Thereupon her relatives on the occasion of a log race killed her husband without ado, without consulting the council or the then chief, Delfino Kôkaipó. Since the latter disapproved of the execution, he obliged the killers to pay wergild to the slain man's kin.

In 1927 the Apą'nyekra suspected Vacca Preta, a Rąmkõ'kamekra living among them, of evil magic, killed him with a gun, and cremated the corpse. Thereupon the three Rąmkõ'kamekra chiefs, accompanied by a number of tribesmen, marched to the Apą'nyekra village and forced the people to surrender the killer, but finally, after some persuasion, they were satisfied by an indemnity.

In the former days, however, such occurrences might evoke prolonged intertribal feuds. A Kre'pų'mkateye whom I knew was a little boy when his uncle was killed by the sorcery of another Timbira tribe, whose name was kept from me in view of my intimate contacts with most of the groups. The boy was trained to regard vengeance as an obligation, which he had discharged several years before my visit, killing two members of the guilty tribe (Krẽyé of Cajuapára) with the assistance of several of his tribesmen. This happened at least fifteen years after the uncle's death.

I have never seen the Rąmkõ'kamekra so incensed against Brazilian law as when I explained that the Government would not tolerate the execution of sorcerers. "What is to become of us then?" asked chief Kukrãčą'; the evil magicians will kill us all, by and by."

## Missions

797 114 *Catholic.*—Notwithstanding Pohl's and Snethlage's statements, I can find not the slightest historical or ethnographic proof of the influence of Jesuit missionaries on any Timbira tribe. Demonstrably the Jesuits have never maintained a mission among any of them; and it is hardly to be supposed that they would have achieved as transients what the Capuchins failed to accomplish in the course of decades.

The first missionary who demonstrably concerned himself with the Eastern Timbira is the ecclesiastic mentioned by Ribeiro:

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS



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Auxiliando a capitania a conversão do gentilismo, que circumvizinhava a referida povoação de São Pedro de Alcantara a qual ainda então pertencia aos seus limites, não se descuidou de nomear e pagar para os ditos fins a um capellão ou vigario; porem que faria Sua Reverendissima neste caso? Excitou por dois ou tres annos todas as expedições que pôde sobre aquelles desgraçados para captival-os, e depois fugiu para o Pará em Junho de 1815, levando numa embarcação furtada a vender muitas destas ovelhas escravas que adquiriu como assentado ser este o derdadeiro modo de approveitar o seu rebanho. Não foi só este pio accerdote que teve taes e ainda peores sentimentos; porque certo commandante de Indios que iam a pacificar-se, nos relatou que fora muitas vezes induzido pelo seu mesmo capellão para os envenenar, e livrarem se do trabalho de os doutrinar e soffrer.

(In order to promote the conversion of the pagans living near said settlement of São Pedro de Alcantara [now Carolina], then still within its boundaries, the Capitania [Goyaz] did not fail to appoint and pay a chaplain or vicar; what, however, did His Reverence do in these circumstances? For two or three years he fomented all raids possible against these unfortunates in order to capture them and finally, in June 1815, he fled to Pará, taking with him in a stolen vessel many of these enslaved sheep of his, which he had acquired as described, convinced that this was the proper way to use his flock. This pious cleric was not the only one to hold such opinions and even worse ones, for a certain commandant of Indians who were about to turn peaceable, told us that their own chaplain had often tried to persuade him to poison them in order to save himself the labor of instructing them.)[275]

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Beginning in 1848, the Carmelite Brother Manoel Procopio, settled in Santa Thereza (= Imperatriz), tried for several years to convert the Krẽyé of Cajuapára and the Krĩkatí, but without success.

From 1848–1875 the Krahõ′ were under the influence of the Capuchin missionary Brother Rafael Tuggia, but the only influence was a considerable admixture with Negro blood, which that missionary is said to have favored. His description of the Krahõ′ betrays incapacity to understand the Indian character and is full of gross errors. He was of opinion that the Krahõ′ should be organized in a colony.

The Capuchin missionaries of Barra do Corda have never spent more than a few hours as transients among the Canella tribes, whose children they would baptize on such occasions, once in a while also marrying a couple. Between 1896 and 1901 they had three or four Rąmkõ′kamekra boys in their school in Barra do Corda; one of them is still living and shows no trace of their instruction. Pompeu Sobrinho erroneously reports that the Canella were once settled at the missions of Grajahú and Barra do Corda.[276] The Capuchins of the latter town were always concerned with the Guajajára, but their first attempt (1870) to organize a colony of them ended in 1875 with the eviction of the missionary. The second attempt (1896), based on a boarding school for the Indian children, led to a sanguinary uprising in which two hundred civilized people, including five monks and seven nuns, lost their lives.[277] Since then effort has been directed solely toward the civilized inhabitants, the Indian mission being completely abandoned.

In part the failure of the Capuchins was certainly due to the anticlerical propaganda of Neobrazilians, whose more or less shady relations with the Guajajára suffered because of the mission. However, the main reason is the missionaries' negativistic attitude, on principle, toward the Indian culture they confront. They feel that they have more important business than to study silly Indian superstitions and Indian customs.

*Protestant.*—Since 1924 English and Brazilian missionaries of the Heart of Amazonia Mission have been working in the interior of Maranhão; they, too, have concerned themselves mainly with the Guajajára. Unsupported by the Government, they proceeded more cautiously than the Capuchins, but they, too, were obliged to

[275] Ribeiro, Memoria, § 86.
[276] Merrime, 8.
[277] Monza, Massacro. Zani, Alto Brasile, 95–196.

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS



799 give up their mission in Colonia because of the hostile attitude assumed by the Guajajára. An attempt to settle among the Krîkatí was frustrated by the dispersal of that tribe in 1930. Since 1924 the missionaries have been also interested in the Krahõ',[""] where two Neobrazilians, Zacharias Campello and Francisco Collares, have been operating, but in 1930 I was unable to detect there any influence on the native modes of thought. Collares was repeating the old Capuchin error in trying to transform the Krahõ' villages into a colony. His attitude is illustrated by his remark to me about log racing; this must be abolished, being a barbarous, brutal sport detrimental to Indian health and tending to "exterminate" so useful a tree as the burity; in its place he intended to introduce the civilized football game. He bitterly complained that since my arrival the Krahõ' were absenting themselves from him, and tried—intelligibly enough from his standpoint—to throw all sorts of obstacles in my way. I got the impression that even then many of the Krahõ' were thoroughly tired of him. After another five years' activity he made statements about the Krahõ'[""] that prove his complete ignorance of the Indians' religious and social ideas—the part of their life which should be of foremost interest to a missionary. Not long after this he seems to have abandoned the mission, which his colleague had left some time before. In 1937 I met him again in Piabanha on the upper Tocantins, where he owned a school for Neobrazilians, a shop, and several houses, and—I do not know with what justification—presented himself as a missionary to the Šerénte.

771 177 The Rąmkõ'kamekra and Apą'nyekra have hitherto had neither Catholic nor Protestant missionaries. Such knowledge as they have of Christianity results from observation of Neobrazilians and the occasional, clumsy efforts of these neighbors to impose their ideas. However, the possibility of adopting the alien faith is quite inconceivable to these Indians, in whose life even indigenous religious notions play a subordinate part. Accordingly, their supernaturalism has remained free of foreign admixture. Baptism and, exceptionally, church weddings are resorted to not for religious but solely from social motives since Neobrazilians equate pagans with the wild beasts and recognize only marriages sanctioned by the church.

The Indians do know the names of half a dozen saints, but lack any notion of their or of Jesus' personality; these names, like the Devil's, merely figure as rhetorical embellishments of their Portuguese speech, patterned as it is on Neobrazilian models. They are thus quite indifferent to the figures of Christian faith. Unlike the Šerénte, they have made no attempt to identify these—except for God the Father—with aboriginal counterparts. Auké (p. 245) is regarded as the Brazilian Emperor Pedro II. The cross does not even serve magical purposes; the little crosses and saints' medallions worn around the neck are regarded as purely decorative. This is the extent of their "Catholicism," to which Ignace refers. The Protestant songs the Indians, especially the women, try to learn, precisely as they do the heathen chants of the Guajajára.

[""] Grubb, Lowland Indians, 29.
[""] Estevão Pinto, Indígenas do Nordeste, 214, note.

It seems to be a common feature

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177 of all Gẽ tribes that they generally assume a bluntly negative attitude toward the civilizing efforts of the Portuguese population and, however much inclined they are to accept the amenities offered to them by the Whites with respect to material things, nevertheless in other respects they continue to live in strictly conservative fashion with the traditional tribal usages and customs.

797 In this matter even a century long catechism has not been able to change anything essential.

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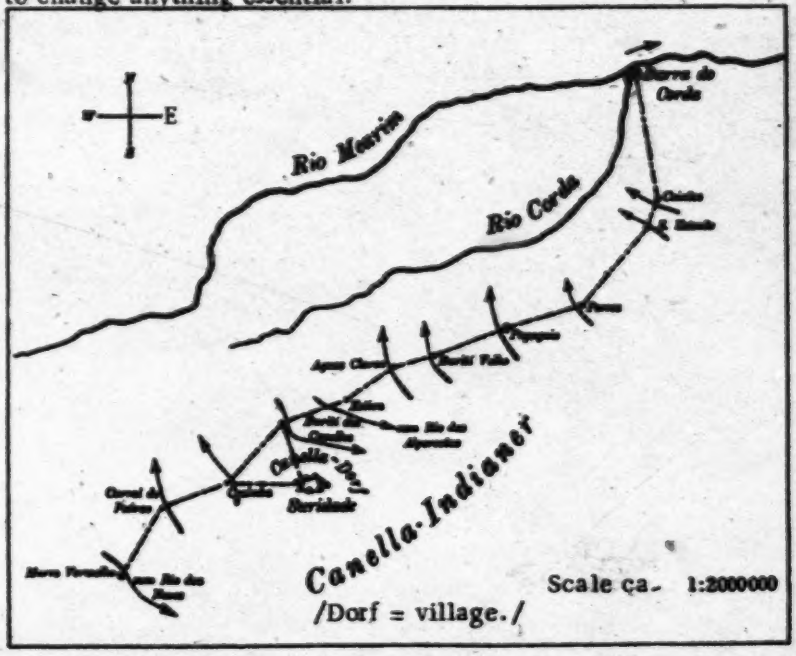


797 According to concurring mission reports, there seems to have
177 been no success at all /46/ in achieving any lasting influencing and
171 education of a Gẽ tribe in the sense of European culture.

For example, the French Dominicans on the Araguaia, according to their own statements, have been unable to exert any permanent educative influence even of only nominal value on the Kayapó /Cayapo/ during a period of almost 15 years of devoted missionary activity.